

Moorside Allotments Moth Survey: March – April 2011 Update. J. Wallace

Following a break over the winter months, trapping was resumed on March 4th. The same methods have been used as last year, namely placing a light trap at the intersection of two of the paths, leaving it overnight and then inspecting the catch in the morning. Once they have been identified, moths are released back into the wild.

The trap was run on three occasions in March and 5 times in April. The species caught are shown in the table below. Only small numbers of moths were caught, possibly because, although the weather has been warm for a significant part of April the nights have often been quite chilly. One effect of the warm weather however has been that various species have emerged early this year and this was certainly the case for one of the species caught from the allotments during this period. A total of nine species were recorded compared to four species during April in 2010. Species that were recorded for the first time at Moorside Allotments during this period are indicated with an asterisk after the scientific name. Some of the species caught are illustrated on page 2.

The species caught were:

Scientific name	Vernacular name	Comments
<i>Agonopterix arenella</i> *		A relatively plain looking 'micro-moth'. The larval food plants include <i>Carduus</i> and <i>Cirsium</i> thistles amongst others. One record.
<i>Chloroclysta siterata</i> *	Red-green Carpet	A common moth. Food plants include oak and various members of the rosaceae such as blackthorn, apple, cherry, dog-rose. One record.
<i>Eupithecia assimolata</i> *	Currant Pug	Another common geometrid species. Food plants are wild hop, red currant and black currant. One record.
<i>Nola confusalis</i> *	Least Black Arches	Small black and white moth. Larval food plants include limes (<i>Tilia</i> spp), Downy Birch and Blackthorn. Recorded on 10 April, ten days earlier than the previous earliest record for Northumberland. Several recorders around the county caught this species on the 10 th suggesting there was a general response to the warm weather.
<i>Orthosia cruda</i> *	Small Quaker	Less frequently recorded than the other <i>Orthosia</i> species but still common. Larval food plants are various tree species including willows, oaks, birch and hazel. One record.
<i>Orthosia cerasi</i>	Common Quaker	Very common Spring-flying species. 4 records.
<i>Orthosia incerta</i>	Clouded Drab	Another very common Spring species. 1 record.
<i>Orthosia gothica</i>	Hebrew Character	One of the commonest moths in the region and the commonest at this time of year. 7 records.
<i>Scoliopteryx libatrix</i> *	Herald	A fairly common moth that over-winters as an adult and is sometimes found in numbers inside cellars, caves and such like. Larval food plants include various poplars and willows.



◀ *Agonopterix arenella*

Red-green Carpet ▶



◀ Least Black Arches

Herald ▶

